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January 12, 1998

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

DIVERSITY TOPIC OF DISCUSSION AT EIU CONFERENCE

CHARLESTON -- The Office of Civil Rights and Diversity is sponsoring its third annual "Opening Doors: Diversity at Eastern" conference to be held Thursday, Jan. 22, at Eastern Illinois University's Martin Luther King Jr. University Union.

Students, faculty, staff and community residents are invited to participate in this year's free programming, scheduled to take place from 8:30 a.m. to 6 p.m.

Workshops will address a wide variety of diversity issues: race, gender, national origin, sexual orientation and ability. These interactive workshops have been spread throughout the day, allowing participants to attend as their schedule permits.

Two of the workshops -- "ACTION! A Common Sense Approach to Improving Your Campus" and the "Student Leaders' Workshop: A Common Sense Approach to Improving Your Campus" -- will be presented by Steve Birdine, president of Creative Diversity Communications and coordinator of Diversity Programs at Indiana University, Bloomington.

Other workshops presenters include Anne Gillespie-Bolter, an instructor in educational psychology and guidance at Eastern; and Cynthia Nichols, director, and Robert Miller, faculty assistant, Office of Civil Rights and Diversity. In addition, experienced moderators will be guiding

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various panel discussions.

The conference will also feature a luncheon and keynote speaker. Godson Obia, an associate professor of geography at Eastern, will present information illustrating the importance of diversity in Illinois in his speech, "Demographic Change and Diversity in Illinois." The cost of the luncheon is \$5 for Eastern students and staff, \$7 for all others, and reservations should be made prior to Monday, Jan. 19. There is no charge to attend Obia's speech only, and seats will be available for those not participating in the luncheon.

For information, phone the Office of Civil Rights and Diversity at 581-5020.